

Slim book crammed with tips

Making lists to remind you about things is one of the oldest and best self-management tips going. Now there's a whole book of lists that remind you how to be an effective manager.

"The Manager's Book of Lists" is a wonderful 123-page paperback packed with useful suggestions. The book was compiled by Sam Deep, a communications professor at University of Pittsburgh, and Lyle Sussman, a management professor at the University of Louisville.

The 101 lists cover the gamut of management topics, beginning with "Eight Strategies for Getting People to Listen to You" and ending with "Nine Things to Do If Your Boss is a Jerk."

Deep's background in communications strongly flavors the book. That's as it should be, because, as the authors assert, managers spend 75 percent of their time listening or talking with people, reading, or writing. The first 28 lists — and 48 pages — cover those basics;



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all the things that we know but often need to be reminded of about communicating.

List No. 4 gives eight types of words to use carefully: jargon, euphemisms, idioms, slang, profanity, of-

fice-specific phrases, vague language or words that elicit emotional reaction — such as referring to women as "girls." The point: Make sure you are speaking for your listener, and that way you won't be misunderstood.

The other lists delve into more sophisticated management techniques, such as assertive supervision, managing for quality results, running effective meetings and managing conflict.

I really liked List No. 19, which provides "Thirteen Objections to

Expect to Your Ideas." It includes: It costs too much; if it ain't broke don't fix it; let's wait ... let's see what our competitors do; we tried this before and it didn't work; it's too risky; and how do I know I can trust you?

Some other examples of lists to help you manage are:

■ "Eleven Steps for Conducting an Effective Performance Appraisal."

■ List 47, "Nine Steps to Get People to Give Their Best."

■ List 55, "Seven Ways to Get People to Meetings on Time."

■ List 68, "Ten Different Ways for Resolving Disagreement."

■ List 97, "Fifteen Ways to Keep Your Boss Happy."

Personal management is also included in lists such as the one with tips for reducing stress, and an entire chapter on time management.

This little volume certainly has a bit of everything for everybody, whether you're a manager or aspiring to be one.

The authors suggest reading it

from cover to cover and then keeping it handy as a "how-to" guide.

I tried reading the book straight through, and I found myself really overwhelmed. The lists' brevity make them a quick read, but their spectrum is so far-reaching that the book quickly becomes too much to absorb.

I suggest using the book as a reference as needs arise. That way you can focus on the situation at hand and the suggested approaches.

"The Manager's Book of Lists" is available from Sam Deep of Glenshaw, Pa., for \$9.95.

The bottom line: The book is packed with useful information, but the key to making it work is remembering to refer to it in your time of need.

Hillel Segal's column has been broadened to include evaluations of gadgets, seminars and books designed to enhance business productivity. Segal is a management consultant based in Boulder.